decision and of breaking his word, when the fact was that he had made up his mind that it would be far better for the army to defer taking the field until the spring, but was unwilling, for the reasons mentioned above, to say so plainly to any one.

The consequences to McClellan himself were naturally and inevitably most unfortunate. Distrust of him grew day by day in the minds of many influential men in and out of Congress. The public became clamorous for an advance of the army. During the months of October and November the weather was fine, and the roads were excellent. The army numbered in all upwards of 150,000 men. More than 100,000, so it seemed to the public, which did not concern itself about making the necessary deductions from the aggregate figures,[1] could have gone forth to Manassas, after leaving "Washington, Baltimore, and all other places needing garrisons entirely secure, so far, at any rate, as mere numbers were concerned. The enemy were not far to seek. The country was impatient. People had got tired of waiting for news. The expenses of maintaining the military and naval establishments were enormous. Public opinion demanded another trial of strength between the two armies,—another duel. The feeling was that

the athletes had been trained long enough,—that it was quite time for the day to be set for the great struggle.

In this, however, the public were mistaken. The army was not ready, in the autumn of 1861, to commence an active campaign.[8] For the hard tasks, the

[1] See note 2 ; *post*, 258.

[*] *Cf.* Smith's C. W. P. 40.